

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending, including independent claims 1 and 21. All claims are rejected on the basis of the same prior art as before.

Initially, Applicant thanks Examiners Choi and Banks-Harold for conducting a telephone interview with Applicant's undersigned attorney on December 11, 2007. Applicant's undersigned attorney proposed clarifying claim amendments as set forth above and explained distinctions over the cited art as discussed in more detail below. The Examiners appeared to view the proposed claim amendments favorably but stated that an updated search would be performed, so that no agreement was reached in the telephone interview.

All claims are again rejected with the primary reference being Ando. Specifically, claims 1, 15-17, 19, 21-24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ando. Applicant submits that the claims as amended herein are patentable over the cited art.

Ando provides a description of a system in which, according to one feature, a user can designate still pictures which are to be displayed simultaneously upon playing back a given audio track. Specific pictures are associated with and displayed for each audio track, although the display mode for each audio track can be varied. (E.g., Pars. 16, 134-145, 152-153.)

First, Ando does not describe sequentially playing back video data of a plurality of music pieces recorded in the disk, each for a predetermined time interval as recited in both independent claims. In other words, the video data for each music piece is played back for the same pre-set time interval in Applicant's claims. The Office Action relies on Fig. 7 of Ando for this feature, but Fig. 7 shows three audio tracks that are each apparently played back entirely and for different lengths of time. This is contrary to Applicant's claimed feature.

Paragraph 5 of the "Response to Arguments" section in the Office Action states that the claims do not recite the feature of the same pre-set time interval. Although Applicant believes the claim language "each for a predetermined time interval" does literally recite the same pre-set time interval, Applicant has added additional clarifying

language to claims 1 and 21, i.e., reciting that the video data of a plurality of music pieces are played back “each for the same predetermined time interval.”

Ando also does not conduct such a playback operation upon receipt of at least one search signal for searching the music pieces recorded in the disk, as claimed. The Office Action relies on PGCI “search pointers,” e.g., as identified in Fig. 1. However, these search pointers are recorded on the DVD as part of the management information data structure (e.g., Pars. 85, 96, 120, 126). They are not a “received search signal,” nor are they a “signal for searching the music pieces recorded in the disk.”

Paragraph 6 of the “Response to Arguments” section in the Office Action states that search pointers are necessary for finding music pieces or audio object units. Although Applicant maintains that the PGCI search pointers in Ando are not a received search signal for searching the music pieces recorded in the disk as claimed, Applicant has added additional clarifying language to claims 1 and 21, i.e., that the playback operation is conducted upon “receipt of at least one search signal entered by an operator for searching the music pieces . . .” (support in application, e.g., at ¶¶ 59-60, 68).

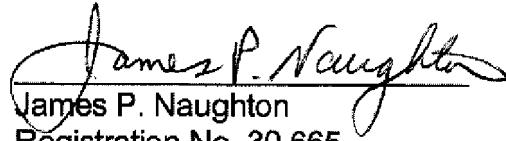
Ando also does not describe that “the played audio data is played back during the playback of video data of at least one music piece for which the played audio data is not recorded on the disk as corresponding audio data.” Although Applicant believes the existing language adequately distinguished over Ando, Applicant has added additional clarifying language, i.e., reciting “continuously playing audio data” and reciting that “the played audio data is not as frequently changed over as the played video data during a search operation” (support and explanation for this feature is found in the application, e.g., at ¶¶ 19-20, 26-28, 43, 74-76). Applicant submits that this feature also is not disclosed in Ando.

Claims 2-4, 6-14, 18 and 26 are again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Ando in view of Yamamoto. Yamamoto is cited only for the teaching that audio data can be recorded and played back separately from video data and that a DVD-video can be used as the disk. Yamamoto does not cure the deficiencies of Ando explained above in reference to the presently amended claims, so that these claims are patentable for at least the reasons identified above for independent claims 1 and 21.

Claims 5, 20 and 25 are again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Ando and Kawabata, or obvious over Ando, Yamamoto and Kawabata. Kawabata is cited only for the teaching that an arbitrary time interval can be set as a playback time interval. However, the cited portions of Kawabata only describe setting a sleep timer for audio/visual apparatuses and do not relate to Applicant's claimed feature of "arbitrarily setting a time interval for which each of the music pieces contained in the disk is sequentially played back." Moreover, Kawabata does not cure the deficiencies of Ando explained above in reference to the presently amended claims, so that these claims also are patentable for at least the reasons identified above for independent claims 1 and 21.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the claims as amended are patentable over the cited art and respectfully requests reconsideration of this application. If the Examiner believes the application still is not in condition for allowance, he is requested to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney at 312-321-4723.

Respectfully submitted,



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